

A
SERMON

PREACHED AT THE
ASSIZES
HELD AT
LEICESTER,

For that COUNTY.

On the Twenty third day of *March*,
168 $\frac{1}{2}$.

BY
NATHANIEL ALSOP, B. D.

Rector of *Church-Langton* in the County of *Leicester*.

L O N D O N,

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SEYMOUR

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To the Right Worshipful
RICHARD ROBERTS Esq;
High-Sheriff of the County of Leicester.

S I R,

WHen you pleased to lay this piece of Service upon me, of Preaching at the Assizes, I bethought my self how to discourse seasonably and profitably, under the present State of Affairs, and at such a general Assembly of the Country; and soon came to a Resolution, That to oppose something, what my poor Talent could furnish out, against the spreading of an Epidemical Evil, too visible upon us, could not be an improper Undertaking: And certainly he is but an ill Member of the Publick, who at the time when a dangerous Fire appears breaking out, will not bring his Bucket to the quenching of it. If any shall except against my meddling with Political Matters in the Pulpit, they ought to reflect, how our People are of late made all Statesmen; and that to treat them as such at some times, is become necessary to their Edification. In the Publick Places of Conversation you shall have the Men of Trade arrogate as much Knowledge of Politicks now, as heretofore their Representatives

The Dedication.

presentatives could arrive unto : So that what is here touched upon as to these Matters, is no ways meant ad Magistratum; I presume not to instruct them therein; but ad Populum still: And to rectifie some Notions in them, which might have a mischievous Influence upon Christian Practice, I trust, will not be thought scireign to the Business of a Divine. The Sermon hapned to find a favourable Reception with its Audience, and I never intended it should have gone further; but some, whose Judgments I ought to subscribe unto, thought it might be more serviceable, if made more publick; and others, whose Authority I shall never disobey, were with some Importunities desirous to have it so: And these are the true Causes of this Publication; whereof I need not inform you, Sir, who your self are my best Voucher to the World, for the Reality of this whole Matter. And now, Sir, it begs leave to come forth under the shelter of your Name, not only for the common Reason of such Dedications, but chiefly because the subject Matter and Design of this Discourse requires the Protection of one like your self, whose clear and disinteressed Zeal for the Publick is so exemplary among us. And then the many Favours which I have received from you, bind me to all Opportunities of Gratitude, and to own it to the World how much I am,

SIR,

*Your most faithful and obedient Servant,
Nathaniel Allop.*

EXOD. XX. 12.

*Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that
thy days may be long upon the land which
the Lord thy God giveth thee.*

THE Law of the Decalogue recorded in this Chapter, hath one pre-eminence above other parts of the Scripture; if they were dictated by the Spirit of God, this was also written by his Finger; which may serve as *a nota bene*, a Hand in the Margin, to direct and engage our Observation. That part of it which I have read, is also recommended unto us by its singular Circumstances; St. Paul observes it is the first Commandment with promise, *Ephes. 6. 2.* And among the Moderns, *Grotius* notes, how fitly it stands in the front of the second Table, agreeably to the method of the *Roman Laws*, which in the first place secur'd the Sanctity of the Government; so this here containing the Nerves and Force of those special Laws, which are the preservatives of Humane Society, deservedly takes precedence of the rest. As to the sense and meaning of the words, the *Jewish* Interpreters and Christians do generally consent, that the duty of Subjects to their respective Civil Governours, is more than by Consequence.

sequence and Reduction here intended : *Imperium sancitur, præcipitur obedientia*, saith Melancthon upon the place. And Calvin goes about to assign the Reason, why a name of Nature is here given to a Political Relation : *It is*, saith he, *to soften the savage disposition of Man, who is naturally impatient of Subjection; to bring the stiff-neck, and Iron Sinnew of corrupt Nature, to the yoke of Obedience.* The Truth is what Zophar replies to Job, *Man is born like the wild Asses Colt*, all restraint is against the Grain, every one naturally goes big with Cæsar, and cannot brook a Superior; or else, it may be, the tang of our first Parents aspiring, still ferments in the Blood, to be *tanquam dii*, equal to them that are called Gods. It was therefore upon necessary considerations that St. Paul lays his Apostolical Injunction upon Titus, the Man of God, chap. 3. v. 5. to put them in mind to be subject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates.

It is not enough this be taught and known, but for the great moment of its practice, it ought to be pressed and inculcated, put them in mind. If the Doctrine of Subjection, which is as demonstrable as any Theorem in Euclid's Geometry, was also as much abstracted from the Interests and Passions of Men, as they are, then might it expect as free and easie a passage; but when this Nail must be driven against the inward resistance of Pride, and Ambition, of Envy, Avarice, and Revenge, and such like impenetrable Opposites; no wonder if a greater Force, and better Skill be required, and repeated strokes: and it were to be wished, that some one, a Master of Assemblies, had undertaken the fastening of it at this time; in which vacancy the forementioned Causes have wrought with me also, the meanest of my Brethren, to attempt this part of my Office and Duty; especially being stirred up with the great
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and crying Sin of the Times, which is plainly a wantonness under the gentle Yoke, a surfeiting upon the blessings of Government ; and I fear there is but too much cause to complain, that it is fairly drawing on to an Open Contempt of Authority : and who then is so hardy, as not to dread the Event ? If such provocations as these should awaken the Vengeance of Heaven, and move God by his immediate Arm to assert the Honour of his own Institution ; the Image of our distempered State any one may behold in the Glass of the *Israelites*. It was at the time when their Supream Governour was one of the meekest and most merciful Men upon the Earth ; it was not long after their deliverance from the *Egyptian* Bondage, where they had smarted by the Impositions of the most cruel Taskmasters that ever an ingenuous People groaned under ; and yet upon every little Discontent, if all things went not according to their own Hearts wish, immediately they grow sick of the Government, and *quis est iste Moses ? Why doth this Moses, and the Priest his Brother, take so much upon them ?* They grew weary of Manna, and nauseated the Bread of Heaven, because it was constant, and ever provided for them at hand ; but instead thereof asked Meat for their Lusts. It was not enough to satisfy their natural Appetites, and real Wants, but their wandering Fancies, and their various Dissenting Pallats must be humoured also ; and upon such distates like these, they fell into frequent Mutinies and *Affociations* against the Lord, and against his Vice-gerent ; insomuch that *Moses* was forced to declare freely, in that his Farewell Oration, which *Josephus* hath left penned unto us, in the Fourth Book of his *Antiquities*, That he was more often in hazzard of his Life from them, than from any other of his Uncircumcised Enemies. I shall not stay to adjust the Circumstances, nor set the
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Members of the Comparifon in joint; but only to ſhew how far we have funk from the Rule of our Duty, and ſtill are falling? give me leave to point you back, up as far as to the Source and Fountain of all Political Sanctions, the Baſis of Government, the Cement of Societies, the Princes heavenly, and unforfeitable Charter, comprehended in this ſhort Precept, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother*, &c. In which Words I ſhall obſerve no more Particulars, than what are obvious unto every Eye: As,

1. The Stile or Title here given to the Supream Magiſtrate, *of a Parent*.

2. The Debt belonging unto him, *Honour*.

3. The enforcement of the Duty by a Promise, but with the implication of a ſevere Threat, *that thy days may be long upon the Land*, &c.

1. The Stile here is a Name full of Obligation and Endearment; we find God himſelf often calling his People to reflect upon it, to hold them faſt to their Duty; *for I am a Father to Iſrael*, ſaith God, *Jer. 31. 9. he pitieth as a Father, Pſal. 103. 13.* with all the bowels and tendernels that can be ſhewed; *he corrects as a Father, Prov. 3. 12.* alwaies within meaſure, and leſs than our Offences deſerve; and upon the ſame ſcore he alſo claims the obſervance of *Sons, Mal. 1. 6.* And no doubt but this Title here given to Kings and Sovereign Powers is very apt to move Obedience, to becalm the ſtrivings of the People, and to ſmooth the Yoke of Government, which ſome *Belialites* will always ſpurn at; but what doth *Mofes* then, or rather the Lord himſelf, thus ſpeak unto us; meerly becauſe of the hardneſs of our Hearts? Doth he condeſcend to ſuch mean Artifices, to treat us by the Popular courſes of Ambition, which is wont to ſtroak and ſooth the Beaſt which ſhe deſigns to ride? No, I ſuppoſe the ſoft and endearing ſtile

stile here used, is more than a Colour of Rhetorick, and shall therefore take the occasion, which is fairly offered, to reflect upon the Original of Civil Government; and the rather, because if it shall appear to be founded in the Natural Right of Paternal Authority, as the most judicious do affirm, it will prepare the way for that which follows, and the Duty of the Text will be inferred by a necessary Logical deduction.

The stile of the Text, being a Name of Nature and Authority too, suggests unto us, in all our researches after the Rise and Birth of Dominion, to have one Eye to the Order and Course of Nature: so that to understand the Original of Civil Power, we must ascend to the true Original of Mankind; and this Method will bring us to acknowledge the Truth of that Aphorism of St. Irenæus, *Cujus jussu nascuntur homines, hujus jussu Reges constituuntur*. There have been perhaps as many Opinions concerning the Origine of the World, as concerning the Origine of Government, and all of them wide of Truth: But then, as *Tatianus*, from a malicious Adversary of Religion, confesseth himself to have been converted to the Faith of the Holy Scripture by that satisfactory and consistent account which it gives of the Creation of the World; so the beginning of Civil Power and Dominion, which the same part of Holy Writ accounteth for also, if duly considered, may as well convert the seditious underminers of Government, and *turn the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just*; when it shall appear that it was neither blind Chance, nor steep Ambition, nor prevailing Usurpation, nor Pacts and Covenants, nor any happy Occurrence, nor the longest Sword, nor most Voices, which made the first distinction betwixt King and Subject.

That the first common Parent of Mankind was invested

with a Sovereign Power, and acted as Monarch of the World, there are few will question, that will not also call in question the History of *Moses*. When *Adam*, who had Dominion given him by God over all the Creatures, disposing of his Sons, to one committed the Tillage of the ground, to another the care of the Flocks and Herds, where then was the Equality of Persons, where the Community of Goods? And if the World was at length peopled by the Offspring descended from this Stock, it will be difficult to conceive, how and when such a state of Natural Freedom should be introduced. * The great Master of Politicks, *Aristotle*, saw this without his Bible; and although, for want of the Divine Oracles, he was forced to wrap his head in the dark and inextricable Clouds of Eternal Successions, yet he saw a necessity of asserting a Natural Subordination, where there was a Natural Succession, and came at length to conclude, that the greatest Kingdom in process of time grew from a single Family, as a large spreading Branch shoots from a slender Stock. It may be the stile of Royalty was not heard of 'till the World was well on towards 2000 years old, that came in with the other Trappings and Ornaments, when Monarchy became magnificent and pompous in the Eyes of the People; but if we look after the Essentials of Power, we shall find them lodged in the first Parent of Mankind, and transmitted as an Inheritance by the First-born of the Family. And to deduce this, there is no better Clew than the Sacred History it self, which leads us down from *Adam* the Universal Monarch, by the Patriarchal Line, unto the first Plantation of the World after the Flood, when several Colonies were led out by their respective Heads, and became distinct Kingdoms, whereof the Sons or Grand-Children of *Noah* were Kings by a Fatherly-
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Right, as appears at large from *Gen. 10.* and among Humane Authors, most accurately from that barbarous Writer at the end of *Ensebius's Chronicon*, whom for the sake of the Subject which he handles, the great *Scaliger* thought worthy to be joined with those renowned Pieces of Antiquity. If we follow the Abettors of this Hypothesis, and travel farther by the same Thred of Scripture History into the Land of *Canaan*, we shall find there, in a Country of no great Compass, above 30 Kings at one time in that little Land. And at this day they tell us, if we look into the state of Affairs in the *Indies*, and those Countries of late and new discovery, where they live by the Dictates of simple and untaught Nature, without the invented Models of Policy, we shall find a multitude of petty Kingdoms, and the Power of Governing descending for many Generations, and no other account but that it ever hath been thus, by a Succession whose beginning they know not; which seems fairly to point up to the Original of Civil Government, and to give us Cause from the Premises to Conclude, that the Paternal and Regal Authority are the same in Nature, not differing in Kind, but in Extent only, *μὴν δὲ τῆς νόου*, as *Philo* expresseth the same thing.

But I design no more than the opening and explaining the Notions; it hath been sufficiently strengthened and guarded against all the feeble Encounters made in opposition to it, by a Learned Writer of our own, [Sir R. Filmer] in his Observations touching Forms of Government; only because the best illustration of a thing is by setting to its Contraries, I shall therefore beg leave to glance upon some things which are offered by those persons, who are pleased not to admit of this Account of the Original of Government, which in it self is so easie to be apprehended,

so agreeable to the nature of Things, and Scripture History, so honourable to God and his Providence, and so conducive to the Ends of all Authority and Rule.

And here, first, I cannot but observe, how patient and complying our Republicans many times are, that the *Epicurean Hypothesis* should take place; Whether *Promotion comes from the East or the West, or yet from the South*, they are content, *whatsoever Wind* blows it, so that the *Lord* be not in *that Wind*; as wholly unconcerned how things go, as the God of *Epicurus* himself, as *Tully* jeers them of old: And all is, only to keep out the suspicion of a Divine Institution in the matter. And indeed it seems fully as consentaneous to Reason, that the Fabrick of the World should arise from the fortuitous Hit of Atoms, (as that Philosopher taught,) as that Order and Government, the Strength and Beauty of the Universe, should proceed from any thing but the Disposition of a most Wise Creator. Can these Men believe themselves, who are wont to call upon the People to follow Providence, according to their serviceable Doctrine of *Ownings* and *Outgoings* when time was? Or indeed, do they believe any thing of Providence at all? who can tell us now, *That God is no more a Favourer of one Family than another, no more than he is a Respector of Persons*. Nevertheless, we trust that he is a *Respector of Causes*; and if the just and righteous Claim of any Family or Person shall engage his Favour at all times, then how much more in the greatest and most weighty Affairs of Mankind? Our Saviour hath taught us, That the very Hairs of our Heads are in the Accounts of Heaven; and shall the Crowns of Monarchs be neglected and forgotten? If there be no Affliction upon a Person or People that may be said to rise out of the Dust, then sure an unjust and cruel Ruler, which is one of Gods severest

verest Scourges, is not set up by Chance or Fortune; and if not an usurping Tyrant, who is a common Plague, then certainly no just and lawful Prince, who is a publick Blessing, without the Appointment of God.

If it be left to Men to constitute Governours, it's to be feared, that Fraud or Violence will have the greatest stroke; and that's another way whereby they would have it believed that Empire and Dominion might take its rise. Bt this sure is a very improper Ground whereon to found a just and rightful Power, unless it should be industriously so contrived, to leave an Original Flaw in the Conveyance, to the end that Subjection shall be always precarious, and, when occasion serves, renounced with a Justification.

Force or Fraud the beginning of Empires! It seems so jealous are the Party we have here to deal with, lest God should be thought to have any hand in the matter, that they chuse rather intirely to ascribe it to the Devil; for he is the original Liar and Murderer too; And if the way to a Throne be to wade through Blood, and make the slaughter'd Carcases of all Opposers so many Steps of Ascent to mount them unto Greatness, I see not but why every such exalted Head may call him *Father*, whose Name in the *Greek Tongue* is *Ἀπολλών*, *The Destroyer*, *Rev. 9. 7.* And then what a hopeful Exercise of Power must attend such a Beginning? The Sword must needs maintain its own Title; and if the Coronation Robes be dyed in Blood, any one may foretell what Complexion Justice thenceforth is like to appear in. An Usurper brings along with him a necessity of renouncing all Humanity, and Religion too: He must hate all those whom he hath injured, and must punish whatsoever his own guilty Fears present, as if they were manifest Crimes; he must tolerate all manner

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ner of Disorder and Confusion in the Worship of Heaven, for the sake of those which himself hath brought upon the Affairs of Earth; he must give up the Word of God to mercenary Tongues and unhallowed Hands, to be Tentered, and set upon the Rack, till, with the Heathen Oracles of old, it can *quarrel*, cant something in the favour of his Pretensions. And who can be so vain, as even to dream of Property or Liberty under such a State? Who can hope for the enjoyment of a rightful Possession, whilst the Government it self is but a splendid Robbery? I shall pass over this Particular, with that Observation of the wise Historian Tacitus, *Imperium flagitio acquiritum nemo unquam bonis artibus exercuit*; which may bear this Construction, *The worse the Title, the more intolerable must the Tyrant be.*

But because the Deduction of Government from its true Original, makes so fair for the Natural and Divine Right of Monarchy, above all other Forms or Models whatever, hence the implacable Enemies thereof have another Reserve, in which indeed they place their greatest Strength and Confidence, and that is, by a kind of aukward Courtship to the Multitude, by a most fulsom Flattery of the People, to insinuate into them an Opinion, That all Sovereignty and Power, all Honour and Authority, as to the first Ownership, is theirs, and where they are pleased to lodge it. A most pernicious Insinuation, enough to prompt any People to seditious Attempts; which, in stead of Obedience, (which is the farthest thing in their thoughts) only sets their Heads on work how to recover the Governing Power, which they are told to be withheld violently from them. Now how disagreeing this is both to the tenor of Gods Word, and of his Works also, we shall briefly consider.

1. To the Word of God. As we find mention but of One sort of Government there, so we find Obedience always pressed a quite contrary way than is here supposed, viz. as to an Ordinance of Heaven, not a Contract on Earth; as descending from above, (so *Christ* tells *Pilate*) not arising from below; the Royal Unction being in this respect like that of the High Priests, which was shed upon *Aaron's* Head, and did not creep up from the Skirts of his Garment. We never read our Saviour or his Apostles enforcing the Duty of Obedience upon People from their own Act and Deed, but from the Institution of God, from the Sacredness of his Authority, which is so closely involved in that of his Vicegerents: *St. Paul* is peremptory in it, *Rom. 13.* *That Governours are sent unto the People; are Gods Ministers,* that notes their Original; *for the good and welfare of the others,* there's the End. Nay, the Holy Ghost speaks of Governours as of Earthly Gods; and would it not be a gross piece of Idolatry for any People to be the Makers of their Gods? I think we may suffer them, as the World now goes, to adore them if they please; but surely they ought to be admonished to hold Hands off, and not presume as if they could make or unmake them at pleasure. It was a pretty childish Conceit, that of *Lucian's*, which he reports of himself, That being young, he was set out by his Father to learn the Art of a Statuary, and wondrous jocund and mighty forward he was, having taken great delight in forming little Images of Horses, and other Beasts, and sometimes of Men; but that which pleased his Imagination most, was the hopes and expectation that in time he might carve Gods also. I appeal, whether the Multitude are not made such Children, as often as Ambition cringes, and Popularity buys their Breath, contrary to all other ways of Bargain,
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by setting a prodigious over-value upon it? The Power of the People mult be extoll'd, and harangued in their Ears, even to Omnipotency; and they so dull, as to believe at length, that Majesty it self is nothing else but a swollen strutting Pageant, which the Breath of their Voices hath extended to that Dimension.

I look upon it as no difficult Undertaking, to shew how false and groundless that Doctrine is, of an Implicit Covenant in every Kingdom, betwixt God, and the King, and the People; *according to which, say they, if the King fall away from God, the People may do the same to the King.* This is that which Junius Brutus, and he the first of any Man that I know, broacheth in the beginning of his *Vindiciæ contra Tyrannos*, and lays down as the Foundation of that his Treatise. This is the true Mother which hath brought forth those *Covenants, Holy Leagues, and Associations*, which have at several times threatned Confusion unto Kingdoms: And if some Accountants be not out in their Computation, it is a Doctrine which hath shed more Christian Blood than now runs in the Veins of living Christians: But I must not enter upon the discussion of it at present.

If the Notion of a Popular King be no ways agreeing to the tenor of Gods Word, we shall next examine it by the Rule of his Works; and as to its Existence, it will be found there no better than a *Chimera* in Nature. The World, as God made it, acknowledges no such Conveyance of Power. When was it, in what Age did the People at first consent thus to make a Deed of Gift of their Natural Freedom? We challenge all true Histories to give us an Account of this matter, and have hitherto had no satisfaction. All that hath been found, is, That upon the Dissolution or Dismembring of some Ancient Monarchies,
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People have been forced to enter upon Agreements and Contracts, and to patch up an *Association* in stead of a just Government, and when favourable concurrences fell in, have a considerable time continued in that preternatural state ; but in this case we may say as Christ did of some of the *Mosaic Dispensations*, *from the beginning it was not so*. *Plato* indeed among the Ancients is thought to speak pertinently to this matter ; that Philosopher offers something with a *perhaps*, how some Remnants of People might be left upon the tops of Mountains, after a general Inundation, but then it is after his manner of beating dark and doubtful Conjectures in quest of Truth ; and alas it was his ignorance, or at least the want of a distinct knowledge of the true Original of Mankind, which forced him and other excellent persons upon such extravagant Suppositions, when as the *Upstart Plato* is the most positive man in asserting, that the first Inhabitants of the World did for some time try the Experiment of the brutal life in a Common, like Beasts in a Pasture, and were driven at last by necessity to accept of Government ; which to assert at this time of the day, (now the Scriptures are unlocked, and in every hand, and the other Records of time have been examined,) is a strange presumption upon Mankind, as if all were Levellers in Understanding. We are sure and certain, that God ordered all Humane Race to descend from one man as the common Parent ; which *Bellarmino* himself, who was no great Friend to the Power of Temporal Princes, saith is a sign that God rather approves of the Government of one man than of many. But why may not we use it for an Argument, that no other could possibly take place, whilst there was that known subordination of Children to Fathers ? unless there was such a juncture when the Natural Rights

of Persons were shuffled and confounded, and it was impossible to make out a Claim to the most ancient Fatherhood, which can never be supposed at the first Plantation of Countries, and beginnings of Kingdoms, when the Earth was peopled by several Families under their distinct Heads, as *Moses* by Divine Authority doth assure us. So that what they speak of an Original Independency, and state of Natural Freedom, must be a meer Fiction; or at most only an Artificial Supposition, to understand the force of Contracts and *Common Leagues* made betwixt Equals, but can have no Foundation in Nature.

There was offered to the World not long agoe, an Hypothesis of *Præ-Adamites*, men before *Adam*, upon which a new System of Divinity was raised, and that in the end was found to carry a tendency to Atheism and Irreligion; it will concern our Common-wealth Politicians to oblige us with an Hypothesis of *Præter-Adamites*, men of another Race and Lineage, who derive not from *Adam*, a Generation like that of the Dragons Teeth in the Poet, where they may find both their state of Equality, and state of War also; and when their utmost is done, its possible all may be found to tend to Anarchy and Confusion.

But let us, as it becomes good Christians, still adhere to the Word of God; let Holy Scripture, which is every where the adequate Measure of our Faith, be here the Rule of our Obedience also; the tongue of men and Angels cannot speak more fitly of Sovereign Earthly Princes than it doth; nor more loftily with respect to the Original of their Power, nor more obligingly and with greater condescension, to sweeten and engage the Duty of Subjection. Witness the expression of my Text.

And so I pass from the Stile and Title, unto the second thing asserted, *viz.* The Duty it self, which was *HONOUR*; *Honour thy Father, &c.* Ho-

Honour was always accounted as something inherent in the person honouring, and so it may perhaps seem to be altogether at his own free disposal; but the truth is, this may become a Debt as well as any thing else, and not to pay it where it is such, is as direct a piece of injustice, as to rob a man of any thing which is called his own. *Honour to whom honour*, saith the Apostle, *Rom. 13.* where he speaks of rendring unto all their Dues. *If I be a Father where is my Honour*, saith the Lord God. This Honour doth naturally look upwards, and is thought to comprehend all those Duties which Inferiours owe to their Superiours; as Love looks on every side, and is called the fulfilling of all the Duties to our Equals. Now if God, who is infinite Perfection and boundless Excellency, be the Object more of our Admiration and Extasie, which is the excess of Reverence, than any thing else, then our Honour must ascend in proportion to those degrees of nearness which any Object makes in its approaches to the Deity, and so we shall come at length to rest in that primitive gage which *Tertullian* acknowledges in the Name of the Christians of his time, *colimus Imperatorem tanquam hominem, a Deo secundum & solo Deo minorem*; *We honour*, saith he, *the Emperour as a man, but next and immediately unto God.*

For the full import of the Duty, we may draw it forth in three Notions of the word; *viz. Reverence, Maintenance, and Obedience.*

The First is *Estimation* or *Reverence*, which is that signification of the word which bears the stamp of common usage; and this is addressed to the Person of our Civil Parent.

The Second is *Maintenance*, which I think is a sense almost proper to Holy Scripture, and respects his Regal state.

The Third is *Obedience*, with relation to his Laws and Decrees.

But I must not discourse of it in this latitude; should I pursue these severally, I must of necessity intrench too much upon your patience, and the succeeding business of the day: I shall therefore confine my self unto the first of these at present, but may chance to consider it as a Transcendent which is interwoven through the other two, as they shall fall in mention.

But, 1. Honour doth primarily denote the expression of our Estimation and Reverence for some Excellencies in our Superiours, and can never be so fitly placed as when we direct it to our Supreme Governour. It is a shame we should have mean thoughts of the Person whom God hath thought fit to be his Deputy and Representative upon Earth; is he worthy to bear the Impress and Image of the Almighty's Power and Majesty, and not deserving a reverent Idea in our thoughts and minds? There was never any Nation that owned a devout sentiment for their Gods, but paid a proportionable Honour to their Kings, the *Persians* yielded a Divine Adoration to them both. The Primitive Christians gave Reverence to the very Statues of their Emperours, until *Julian* set up the Images of their false Gods by them, with a design by that means to trepan them into Idolatry. The Heathens, generally, for the Blessings of Peace, Plenty, and Protection which they enjoyed, thought it not enough to give the highest Reverence to their living Princes, but after death, by an *Apotheosis*, did bestow a kind of Divinity upon them; and to serve and worship these was the sum of their Religion. But come we to the People of God, God's own People the *Jews*, and behold there how the holy Oil used in their Inaugurations, did by its fragrant odour make
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the Royal Head on which it was poured, as delightful and dear to them as the *breath of their Nostrils*; and the mortality of a Prince was lamented among them as the *quenching of the very Light of Israel*. Behold also among them, what submission and deference they used in their Addresses to Majesty, *Speak thou unto us, and we will hear, and do it*, is their voice in one place; and it is noted for their usual ordinary temper, *2 Sam. 3. 36. that whatsoever the King did, that still pleased all the People*; although it's confessed, upon the fret and ferment of Sedition they were as turbulent as any; yet never was there a more strict Law given to secure the Honour of Sovereign Powers, than God gave unto them, which laid an Obligation not only upon the outward man, but upon the words and thoughts also, *curse not the King, no not in thy thoughts*; and certainly with the highest Reason, for when the Honour of a Prince lies open to be invaded without fear, his Authority is near wounding, and his Person no ways secure; Reputation both guards his Life, and supports his Throne, and they are ever the most dangerous Enemies to both, that undermine him in the good opinion of his Subjects, and render him cheap in those Eyes which should look up with the greatest Veneration; a slanderous Tongue is a more speedy Instrument of Murder than a Sword of Steel, and a virulent Libel of more certain dispatch than Gun-shot, by how much it is easier to reach the Fame of a Sovereign Prince, than to hit his Person. In our Judicial Proceedings, the common Accusation of Criminals lies for Offences against the Dignity as well as the Crown of our Sovereign Lord the King; reckoning every violation of his Laws may stick reproach upon his Government; but there are some Offences which strike at the very root of it, the malicious Arts of lessening

ing him before his People, the levelling attempts to lay the Sovereigns Honour first in the dust, knowing the whole Fabrick of the Government must follow after it. And these are the Crimes which before Earthly Tribunals deserve severest Censures of all others, not but that other sins in some respects may be found more sinful at the last day, but because these are most destructive of Humane Society, and most repugnant to the good and welfare of Mankind: *The Tongue*, saith St. James, c. 3. 5. *is a very small Member, but being set on fire from Hell; being well warmed with that* ~~member~~ *which* ~~is~~ *which* a little after he speaks of, *it can easily put the whole course of Nature into combustion*, and a short speech may contain that essential Poyson and Rancour of Malice in it, as may impregnate the whole Sphere with infection and mischief. These are usually the Springs and first Movers, which bring on greater Revolutions. And when Confusion and Defolation shall follow as a Flood, and the Sword shall march in Triumph o're the Land, and Ruine like a mighty whirlwind shall throw all into heaps, then if perhaps you look for the kindly Fruits of Repentance from the Authors of such Calamity; all must be, only the acknowledgment of a little improvidence, and that they never expected matters would have run on to that pass: Whereas it is a most natural and necessary progress, from the Defamation of a Government to its Dissolution.

And then again, if there be in Scripture a peculiar notion of the word, to *Honour with our Substance*, and if the Holy Ghost instructs us there, that to supply the wants and necessities of our Parents be another Branch of the Honour we owe unto them; as our Saviour most expressly in St. Mark 10. and St. Paul also brings it under the same head, Rom. 13. where he informs those Christi-

ans of their *non exemption* from Tribute, and implies it to be an act of Justice, by his word then used, *ἀποδοτε, render ye, or restore, tribute*; not so much a Gift as a Debt. And it is but a very reasonable return indeed, for our secure nights and our useful days, for our peace and protection, and all the opportunities serving unto life and godliness; I say it is but a very reasonable return, if we contribute to the necessary support of the Government; yet still this ought so to be, as in a way consistent with its Honour and Reputation. The Boundaries and Stations of Nature can never be altered, and a contumely offered from a Son cannot be commuted for, by the performance of any other part of his Duty. You will not much commend the Obedience or dutiful Regards of that person, who shall offer to relieve the Necessities of his distressed Father, but withall shall read him a petulant Lecture upon the ill management of his Estate, and his spendthrift courses, that shall exact accounts with all the rigour and scrupulosity of a Tasker, and tye him up perhaps to such terms and conditions as shall be most grievous and burdensom, if not impossible. There seems to have been more ingenuity, if not less wickedness, in those Pharisees of old, whom our Saviour reproves upon this score, in the 7th of St. Mark; they fairly dash out this part of the Divine Law by their own Traditions, and did not delude the wants and the expectation of their Parents, with a *Subsidie* in one hand, and a *Remonstrance* in the other; by their *Vow of Corban* they put an issue to the matter, and never let it come to a business of bargain and sale betwixt them, or such vile higgling, as can never shew with any decency, unless betwixt an unbelieving Christian and a broking Jew.

Lastly,

Lastly, The great and infallible Test of our *Honour*, is *Obedience*; *Then are ye my Disciples indeed*, saith our Saviour, *if ye do whatsoever I command you*: All our *Hosanna's* and *hails*, without this, are downright mockery. And yet I must confess also, there is a sort of Obedience which hath little or nothing of Honour in it; that which is forced and extorted by the fear of Penalties, and that which is pickt and chosen for Conveniency, and to serve an Interest; and such is the restive and disputatious Obedience, which will go not one step farther than a direct Precept of Scripture shall press it, although it be in matters relating to the Publick welfare, and where there is no Divine Precept to the contrary. The Reason is, because all this may be done where there is no Respect had to the Authority of the Law-giver; and it is that alone which gives the formality and true stamp to Obedience. Now if many shall be found wanting and defective in their Duty, who yet keep the Law, then where shall the Disobedient appear? Nay in what Form of the Kings true Honourers, and right Faithful Subjects, must they be placed, who not only violate the Laws, but also teach men so to do; and teach it not only by Example, but by Precept, by Institutes of Libertinism, by distinguishing men out of their Loyalty, and stating of Cases and Questions, whereby the Law it self is made the only Criminal, and suffers accordingly? Among all the hellish Machinations and Devices which the Enemy of Mankind, in the shape of an Angel of light, hath hitherto used for breaking the Order, and disturbing the Peace and Quiet of the World, perhaps there hath not been a more dangerous one than that which of late hath appeared among us, and is not unfitly called *The Reign of Conscience*. I would not be thought to go about to expose so sacred a thing, whilst

whilst I only express my resentment of those abuses, which it suffers by the folly and wickedness of them who most delight to have the word in their Mouths; and it is the greatest abuse certainly, to Idolize it, and so become Worshippers of our own selves, to ascribe the supremacy and power of determination unto every mans private Conscience, which the Law hath placed elsewhere, for a known and publick resort. The *Oceanists* are wont to tell us of an Empire of men, so they call Monarchy; and an Empire of Laws, and that must be their own dear Common-wealth, but here's an Empire of Conscience which outs them both. This must needs be the most Arbitrary of any other, since men have learnt the artifice to manage Conscience, like those Prisms or Mathematical Glasses, which with a slight turn shall present any Colour, which fancy or affection calls for; that Reign must also be most tyrannical, which knows no milder Punishment for every transgression than the pain of damnation; and what Form of Polity must we call it, when every man is a King at least, being unaccountable for whatever he doth? If this be the reign of Saints, I see not but why the greatest Sensualists in the world may be reconciled unto it; for Conscience at the most, and where it is alledged with the greatest sincerity and truth, is but an act of my own Practical Judgment, which may be corrupted by Interest and Passion, and as often as by following this I decline from the Rule and Measure that is set before me, I do in effect make the last Appeal unto my Understanding Self. And what is there in the world so grateful to a proud unmortified Spirit? It's one of the most luscious pieces of Sensuality which any carnal heart can wish for; and what can the consequence be, should it go on, but the evacuating the use of the Law, and all Ju-

dicial Proceedings, *i. e.* in short, the ruine of a Kingdom? We sure, the People of this Nation, above all others in the World have infinite Reason to acknowledge it with all gratitude to Almighty God, for assigning us our Lot in that Country which of old was called, and still is (would our little Discontents but let us know how to value it) the *Fortunate Island*, not so much for its temperate Climate, but for that happy temper of the Constitution we now live under, both with reference to the Concerns of our Souls, and outward Estate. Our Religion as to its Substance Divine and unalterable, and as to its Mode and Exercise is establishd and settled with the concurrence of all the Wisdom of the Nation, and by the Authority of the greatest Power under Heaven, and cannot be changed or controlled by the Will or Arbitrary Imposition of any man. The Bounds of our Liberty and Property are sacred also, and not to be invaded, so long as there shall be any Reverence had to Law or Justice among us; we must dissolve this Order, or sin our selves out of the Protection of the Government, before we can be miserable; unless with *Jeshurun*, growing fat and pampered, we shall run headstrong down the Precipice of Ruine, nothing else can bring it upon us. Nay, we seem so free from any present Grievance, that we must call in imagination to help us to anticipate Misery, and be astonished at a dreadful painted Scene, which only our affected Fears and Jealousies represent unto us. And next unto Almighty God we must render unto his Majesty the Honour due unto him, in all the fore-mentioned Instances of the Duty, for our Peace and Plenty, for our Shelter and Protection from Foreign Enemies, and for the wise diversion of the sad Effects of our own Animosities, for the repeated assurances of maintaining the Protestant Religion,

Religion, which should be dearer to us than our Lives ; for the continuance of His Clemency and Paternal Care over this our Reformed Church, which renders her equally the Envy of Papists and Dissenters, but a Sanctuary unto all such as flee unto her, with any sober Persuasions of Religion. And where now are our Returns for these Blessings, for which the very Heathens would have been building of Altars, and preparing Sacrifices, upon like occasion ? Whither is our Love and Reverence of Authority fled, or lost among us ? O my Country-men , where is that *Old-English Loyalty* for which this Nation hath been of old so deservedly renowned ? Alas ! the *New Plantation* seems at length to return the Pest back again upon us, that was formerly the Sink and Drain into which the noxious Humours of our State were wont to be discharged ; and now (I know not by what Insatiation) we seem to be fond of, and willing to cherish them in our own Body ; as if *These* could be any Defence to the *Protestant Cause*, which are the profest Enemies of the *best Protestant Church upon Earth* ; and if ever the Peace and Settlement of our *Israel* chance to be disturb'd, it will be (in all Humane Probability) by an Eruption from the Confluence of *These*, when ever they shall be ripe for Mischief : Nay, the fresh Experience of our Sister-Kingdom of *Scotland*, puts it out of question. But blessed be God, the Wisdom and Vigilance of our State is awake, and sufficiently apprehensive from what Quarter the Danger threatens ; and it's hoped the whole Nation will be sensible for what these *Coals of Fire* are kept alive and glowing hot within her Bowels, meerly by those *various Winds of Doctrine* which blow from the Caverns of *Schismatical Conventicles*. To *these* it is our Nation owes her Lankness and Ill-thriving, under the plenteous Means of Grace and Goodness, and

without Gods extraordinary, abundant, and overflowing Mércy, it's morally impossible that the Regular Ministry of the Gospel should have any the least considerable Success upon the Souls of Men among us, under such strong Prejudices, whilst the *strange Fires* of *Nadab* blazing upon *unhallow'd Altars*, shall dazzle and misguide the *Weak*, and the *Wilful* be suffered to persist in the *Contradiction* of *Corah*. If that Paper-Draught and Scheam of an *Association*, which was lately brought to light, be justly thought worthy of the *Abhorrence* and *Detestation* of every Loyal Heart and Hand, you will not spare those *Assemblies* of *Schism*, those *Garrisons* of *Sedition*, which are but so many little Models and brief Essays of the *Association in act*. Neither your *Peace* nor *Religion* are consistent with them. Our Princes *Power in Ecclesiasticals*, after the Example of the Religious Kings of *Judah*, is one main Article of our *Reformation*; and what a mighty Influence this hath upon our *Civil Union*, no Considering Man can doubt: both which are twice contradicted and everthrown; first, by the Fact it self, of *Assembling*, so notorious and daring, in contempt of Authority; and next, by those *Seditious Doctrines* which are but too frequently disseminated among them: Nay, if Pregnant Causes should not sometimes miscarry in their Productions of *evil* as well as *good* Effects, such Practices as these, so scandalous to *Christianity*, persisted in, and vouched for, with the Pretences of Conscience and Religion, were enough to make the Names of Conscience and Religion to stink upon the Earth. As often as the Language of the prostitute Press, and Common Places of Conversation, shall be undutiful and reflecting upon Authority, that only argues an ordinary itchy contagious Evil running upon the Vulgar; but when the Greatest and Justest Power upon Earth shall be confronted with

a pretended Commission from Heaven, and a Publick Exercise of Worship set up, in opposition to that which with the greatest Wisdom and deliberation is establish'd, and *Conscience* brought to vouch for *one*, which is the strictest Tie and Obligation to the *other*, this shews a Diabolical Contrivance to *sham* Religion, and make her turn the Point back, and stab her self. Yet *this*, and many other Distempers we labour under, would meet a speedy Remedy, were we perswaded to put the Duty of my Text into practice. A settled Reverence for Authority would breed an Affection to the Persons of our Governours, and that would produce a Trust and Confidence in the Publick Management, and this would be a means to banish those ill-boading Jealousies and sinister Interpretations which are put upon every Occurrence, and perhaps is the worst Symptom of our Misery. And can there be any thing more equitable, than what is now recommended unto us, to pay that Tribute of Honour to our Supreme Civil Parent, which is exacted, and not denied, in all other Relations whatever? The Master of a Family will not suffer his Power of ordering the Affairs of his own House to be disputed or encroach'd upon by any other; and if it be the Lord of a petty Mannor, how absolute will he expect to be in his little Territories? What a rigid Account shall be exacted of those By-Laws which his Worship shall dictate? and sometimes shall vaunt it more with that one molted Feather of the Crown, and look for more Obiservance, than what himself will pay to the Sacred Head which wears the Diadem. One should think the very Love and Sense of Duty towards our Natural Lord and Sovereign, should be as prevalent at least with us, as the Dread and Terror of a cruel Usurper. And shall *this* depress us to the basest degrees of Servility, and
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the *other* not enlarge our Souls with great Propensions to Honour and Obedience ?

But perhaps there is nothing will make us altogether *Christians* in this great Branch of *Christianity*, but the proper Motives of Religion; and therefore, after the Equity of the thing, let us next consider what Godliness there is in it: And here we shall find such a strict Alliance betwixt the *Fear of God* and the *Honour of the King*, that in Holy Scripture they are commonly joyned together, and in Practice can never be divided. The Name of *Piety* is properly given to that Duty which is owing unto Parents, by the best Classical Writers; and the Honouring of a Prince, I have read in a Learned and Reverend Author, called an *Elicit Act of Religion*, meaning, I suppose, such a Worship of God, as the Image-worship of the *Romanists* would be, were there no Divine Precept in bar against them, rendring their Practice unwarrantable and superstitious. But we need not strain a Point to that nicety; If Loyalty be a Duty indispensable, and an important Act of Christian Religion, we have a considerable Advantage against our Adversaries on both hands, when we dare joyn Issue with them upon the Observation of one of the Chief of Gods Moral Laws, as to which our *Papist* Adversaries, and *Dissenters* also, are notoriously defective. It's Honour enough, that our Reformed Church of *England* hath been here acknowledged the sure Conservatrix of the Principles of Loyalty, and was never wanting in the Practice of them in the worst of Times; and this is it that makes her the Butt of all the Factions, at which they shoot their bitter Arrows: This draws upon her those Loads of Calumnies and Contempts which the Subtile Underminers of the State stir up, and unwary Persons are loud and clamorous in, they know not why: Other-

Otherwise, what reason is there imaginable, why some that pretend an Agreement in *all Doctrinals* with her, and would go further, should yet labour her Ruine, and would rejoyce to see her laid *waste and desolate*, but only because she is known to be an impregnable Defence to the Monarchy and lawful Government of the Nation, and cannot, as others do, give a Dispensation for Resistance?

We may see it by experience among our selves, how the Honour of God is promoted and carried on in the same Company, and by the same Proportions, with that to the King. Who are they that frequent the Places where his Honour dwells, and that set forth the Glory of God, and declare his Majesty and Mercy, by Acknowledgments, Praises, and Confessions made unto him, with due Solemnity and Reverence, and make a Conscience of these things? of offering these Sacrifices to his Honour, as of old they offered their Goods and Cattel? Are they not such generally as pay a dutiful Respect unto his Representative on Earth? such as are polish'd and refin'd by Education, and know the Laws of Observance and Regard? And it's agreeable to the *Genius* of a Gentleman, if not byass'd by some Fanatick Interest, to assert the Publick Rites of Worship; whereas the Lower Part of Men, especially where they have received any Faction's Impressions, are not sensible of any the least touch of Conscience for these Matters, neither for Gods Honour nor the Kings.

I shall add but few Words more: What remains shall be, according to my proposed Method, to shew the Obligation to this Duty, from the Argument contained in the last Clause of my Text, which is the Promise of a very desirable Blessing; but it implies a severe Threatning in case of Disobedience, no less than an utter Abscission and Cutting off from the Land of Promise: And this must needs

needs have a mighty Influence upon *that People* especially, and all others in general. The force of the Inference lies chiefly in the Threatning. Thus God elsewhere invites them with a gracious Promise, *Isa. i. 19. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the Land*; but he drives and compels in the next Words with a terrible Threat, *But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devour'd with the Sword*. The Curse of God hanging over the Head of a contumacious and rebellious People, is enough to reduce them, if there be any *fear of God in the Place*. This is the proper Season for God himself, the King of Kings, to appear and interpose, when his Vicegerents here on Earth shall be set at nought: Here is *dignus vindice modus*, a proper Care for the All-ruling Providence, and a Recommendation worthy of a Divine Revenge; and it hath seldom failed upon such Exigencies, although it hath been sometimes slow. I shall leave but one Example with you; but it is such an one as I think we may challenge all History, Sacred and Humane, to match it; it is in the 16th. of *Numbers*, in this very People of the *Jews*, and not far from the time when this Law was given them. At the beginning of the Chapter *Corah* and his Company rise up against *Moses* and *Aaron*, the Chief Magistrate and Chief Priest, As Religion and Loyalty are still found in Conjunction, so the King and Priest have the same Common Enemies, And what was the Cause that stirred up these Men to mutiny? It was plainly the *Levellers* Grievance, the Imparity of Gods People, the hated Eminence of a Superior, and the heavy Yoke of Government: For thus they vent their Discontents against *Moses* and *Aaron*, ver. 3. *Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the Congregation are holy, every one of them; wherefore then lift ye up your selves above the Congregation of the Lord?* Here's now the Masque of Sedition,

dition, with all its Paint and Varnish on : It is the *Lords Cause* ; it is for *freeing* the Congregation of the Lord from the *Slavery*, which *Moses* held them under, for asserting the *Liberties* of an *Holy People* : And as if the meer joyning with the *Faction* had been *Holiness* it self, it is alledged, *they were all holy, every one of them*. *Moses* looks upon this Face of Affairs as of a dangerous presage, and makes his Appeal to God, the Ordainer of Powers, and the Revenger of Kings ; he joyns Issue with the Mutineers upon the Point, and is content the Divine Right of Government should be tried by the Success which God should give to the Sacrilegious Enterprize of these Men. And what was the Event ? Why, the Question under debate received a dreadful Decision, by the Overthrow and Destruction of the Rebels ; and the Righteous God describ'd as it were the Nature of their Sin, by some Lines of the Punishment, as appears by the Sequel of the Story. Here is now an Example of Gods appearing for his own Institution : and let any one of them who have used to talk so loud for Gods *owning their Cause*, and *Outgoings with their Arms*, match it if they can. It's confess'd, in common Proceedings, and the ordinary Course of Providence, an Argument from Success is very fallacious ; but in the Case as it was here, when the very Point under Trial was the *Divine Right of Superiority and Rule*, and this put upon the Issue, to be maintained by God by Miracle, or else to fall ; and when God shall answer to the Appeal in such an extraordinary manner ; here, I take it, in such a Case as this, Gods Works are as instructive and infallible as his Word ; and in all such Events we may say, as *Pharaoh's* Magicians did, *This is the Finger of God* ; a Finger by which he writes his Will unto us as plain and legible, as ever he did upon the Tables of Stone to *Moses* ; as legible

as is the Precept it self, for whose sake I have alledged this Example.

Now therefore, *knowing the terrors of the Lord*, let us all, my Brethren, be persuaded and exhorted to have a care that we never provoke Almighty God, by our crying Sins, to send forth his Judgments any more upon this People and Kingdom. Let us, who value our selves in being thought the Loyal and obedient Subjects, endeavour by a godly and upright Conversation to redeem the Profession of Loyalty from the evil Slanders of such as seek occasion to reproach it: Let us serve and honour our King with the greatest Zeal and Duty that we owe, but our God infinitely more: Let us endeavour to live, as far as is possible, without the *suspicion* of Vice, as well as free from its *contagion*; that so we may break and discredit that most false, ill-natur'd, and uncharitable *Distinction* which the *Pharisees* and *Hypocrites* of the Times have taken up, when they set the Kings *Loyal Subjects* on one Hand, and the *Saber Godly Party* of the Nation on the other. And let them who have been defective in this kind, shew forth the *Fruits of Repentance*, having enjoy'd a *Pardon* and *Indemnity* for their Crimes past, let them learn at length to be ingenuous, and, if it be possible, to convert their Rancour into Duty; let them but *begin now* to love, honour, and obey the King much, because much hath been forgiven them: Let them never cast a Thought back upon *Egypt*, or its *Plish-pors*, nor chew the Cud upon those luscious Morfels of Rapine and Sacrilege, which, for the ease and health of their Consciences, they have been forced to disgorge: And above all, let them ever mind it, not to relapse into their old Solly, of turning Faith into Faction, and Religion into Rebellion.

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bellion: From which, and all the Plagues and Punishments attending it, Good Lord deliver us, by the Merits of thy dear Son; To whom, with thee, and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour ascribed, the Kingdom, Power, and Glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

F I N I S.
